

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

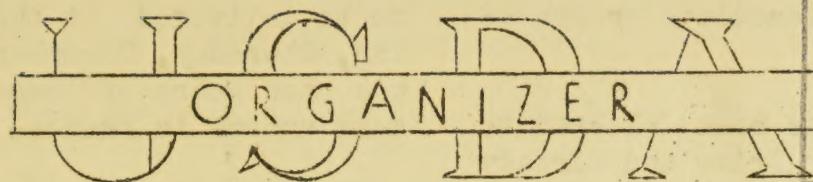
Ag 810

LIBRARY

RECEIVED

★ DEC 5 1936 ★

U. S. Department of Agriculture



American Federation
of
Government Employees

Vol. 1, No. 6

Lodge 31 A.F.G.E.

Affiliated with
American Federation
of Labor

November, 1936

LODGE 31 PLANS MEMBERSHIP BANQUET

In backing the A.F.G.E. legislative program against misplaced economy, Lodge #31 has initiated an intensive membership drive designed to build a representative union in the Department of Agriculture. The drive will culminate in a Victory Banquet.

Conferences with Mr. Paul H. Appleby, Assistant to the Secretary, and Dr. W.W.

Stockberger have disclosed that a representative organization is desirable to the Administration as a means for the expression of employee problems.

Lodge #31 is rapidly approaching a position where it may serve as such an organization. But the speed with which this objective will be obtained must be

(Continued on Page 2)

* * *

WILL SECTION 213 BE REPEALED?

The much belabored Section 213 - commonly known as the "Marital Clause" of the Economy Act of 1931, will undoubtedly arouse much controversial interest among government employees during the coming Congress. Notwithstanding the fact that the intent of Section 213 was to spread employment by restricting jobs among married couples, the effect has been rather to penalize married persons in the lowest wage brackets. We sight the dismissal of some 80 women from the G.P.O. Their salaries averaged less than \$1200, and their husbands received little more. Further facts and figures have appeared from time to time to support the reality that Section 213 has done nothing whatsoever to realize its intent, but has spread misery and privation among hundreds of employees.

A recent poll by the Institute of Public Opinion discloses that an overwhelming majority of the population disapproves of the employment of a wife in the government service when their husband, likewise employed, is able to support the family. (The emphasis is ours. We would also like to add, "According to the American standard of living.")

We cannot help but view with apprehension any attempt to encroach upon the liberties of our citizens, whatever form discrimination may assume. Such tendencies are characteristic of the mediaeval trends of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy - the relegation of women to the three K's of Frederick: Kinder, Kirche and Küche (Children, Church and Kitchen). We want none of such in America.

The Cellar Bill, introduced in the last Congress, although it did not pass, was amended so grossly that in some respects it was more undesirable than the original Section 213. We hope that our legislative representatives will be able to obtain outright repeal without qualification.

* * *

determined by the immediate growth of membership.

A sub-committee has been elected to direct the Membership Drive and already a corps of volunteers is actively engaged in developing a program. The Lodge membership has been divided into two competing groups. The group which brings in the larger number of new members before January 31 of next year will be feted at a Victory Banquet. Prizes and similar dispensations will be made to those recruiting three or more new members.

Expansion of the social life of the Union is being planned. The "wienie" roast held on Saturday, November 21, proved very popular. A dance in December, a series of socials, and lectures by men and women prominent in the labor movement have been projected. The first in the latter series will be an address on government unions in France

to be delivered at the next Lodge meeting, Thursday, December 3. The speaker has had years of experience in government unions in France.

A questionnaire of desired activities has been circulated among the membership. It is imperative that every person available signify his interest and willingness to take part, in order that this Union may assume its proper place in the field of employee relationships.

For additional information see your dues collector or

Louis Matosoff, Chairman
Room 2609 South

John Schricker
Room 3630 South

Clifton C. Warren
Room 3718 South

* * *

WIENER ROAST PROVES HUGE SUCCESS

On Saturday, November 21, Lodge 31, A.F.G.E., fired the opening gun in its membership drive with a wiener roast in Rock Creek Park.

Some excitement was provided when Ed Huberman, with a mighty swat, sent the baseball flying into the "crick," from whence it was heroically rescued by Nellie Shaffer. There were plenty of good tackles and passes in the football game the boys staged, even if it did result in a few sprained wrists and twisted ankles.

Volley Ball proved the popular game of the day. Jim Radabaugh had a disconcerting habit of throwing the ball at the server instead of to the server. However we know, Jim, that it was all in fun (at least we hope so!).

We were surprised to discover that Lodge 31 is equipped with a set of mighty fine voices (especially the tenors) and what harmonizing! Do not be misled, however. Coffee was the only beverage served.

Those who missed a good time at this picnic should come to our next affair and get acquainted with some of their fellow-members.

Lodge 31 is pleased to announce that it will have for its next regular meeting a speaker who has recently returned from France. This young man has worked for the French government and has had active experience in its unions ... we can assure you that his talk will be extremely interesting.

You are invited to attend ... bring your friends.

Thursday, December 3

8:00 P.M.

Room 2050 South Bldg.

SOIL CONSERVATION PERSONNEL CHIEF INTERVIEWED

Assurances of helpful cooperation on the part of the Soil Conservation Service have recently been received.

At an interview held on Tuesday, November 24, Dr. Roy W. Kelly, Chief of Personnel and Training assured a special Grievance Committee of Lodge #31 that this Service conforms in policy with the general policy of the Department of Agriculture. He stated that his office had no objections to an employee joining a bona-fide government union. He stated further that he maintained an "open door" for all employees and would countenance no discriminatory activity against union members.

At the close of the interview, Dr. Kelly announced that the policy of the Soil Conservation Service would coincide with that maintained by Dr. W. W. Stockberger, Director of Personnel of the Department. Dr. Stockberger set down the following principles as announced in the U. S. D. A. Organizer, June 1936:

1. A dispute between an employee and the management can be handled by the employee or his representative through established supervisory channels.
2. Failing to gain proper adjustment, the employee or his representative may appeal the dispute to the central office for investigation and adjustment; and
3. Any duly organized union committee is considered an authoritative employee representative.

The Committee found the attitude of Dr. Kelly very encouraging and was pleased with his promptness in assuring them cooperation in accordance with the established policy of the Department. Lodge #31 can look forward, we think, to a spirit of cooperation which cannot but enhance the welfare of the Soil Conservation Service and that of its employees.

Employees of the Soil Conservation Service are cordially invited to attend the next meeting of Lodge 31. Interesting speakers, lively discussions, and timely activities are promised.

Lodge 31 is your Lodge! Join it! and assure yourself of a voice in activities which may have a direct bearing upon your job and your welfare.

Thursday Night 8:00 P.M. Room 2050 South Bldg.

BOOK REVIEW

MAN'S WORLDLY GOODS

By: Leo Huberman -- Harpers Press, N.Y.C. -- 349 pp., \$2.50

Point of view is a vital element in any book on economics. It is a refreshing experience - and a rare one - these days to find a volume here and there which handles its material in a liberal way, selecting judiciously, expounding soundly, and interpreting wisely.

This volume, in explaining history by economic theory, and economic theory by history, takes the "dismal science" out of the historical vacuum into which it has so long been filtered. You can't study history without considering its economic aspect nor can you really understand economic theory without correlating it with its historical background.

This book is readable. Clearly and fluidly, in everyday language, it makes its points with driving force. It should be especially interesting to union members or to those desirous of learning about labor unions, for it contains a substantial section on this subject. Further, it gives genuinely modern explanations of catch-words that many of us have glibly taken for granted, without really comprehending. Try "free-trade," "slack-renting," Marxism," trade expansion," etc. etc.

Max Lerner, editor of "The Nation," has called the book "a brilliant piece of work that blazes new paths in historical synthesis and the art of exposition. It is at once clear writing and sound scholarship, and a reading of it should serve to orient anyone in the muddle that we call the contemporary world."

* * *

THE NEW WASHINGTON LABOR STUDY GROUP

The Lodge was fortunate, at its last meeting, in having Miss Virginia Dean, chairman of the Washington Labor Study Group, explain the splendid courses being offered by this group. The Washington Labor Study Group was organized in answer to the growing demand for courses in trade unionism and allied subjects by people interested in the labor movement. Among the courses offered are: Introduction to Labor Unionism, Significant Events in Labor History, Organization of White Collar Workers, and others too numerous to be included here in its entirety. Further information may be secured from President Schricker. Those wishing to register for any of the courses should get in touch with Miss Virginia Dean, 2124 P St., N.W., Tel. Potomac 3961. Classes are held at Friends Meeting House, 2111 Florida Avenue, N. W.

* * *

THE CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM AND THE GOVERNMENT WORKER

Labor Lodge #12, A.F.G.E. has recently initiated a series of lecture discussions which should prove of great interest to all government employees. Eight meetings will be held, each of which will be conducted by a speaker prominent in government circles and expertly versed in the intricacies of the Civil Service system.

The first lecture was held on November 24th with Leonard D. White of the Civil Service Commission in the chair. The next two lectures - the first scheduled December 8th, will be delivered by Mr. O'Rourke also of the Commission. His subject will be "Employment." He will discuss the problem from all of its important angles, such as "Examination," "Certification," "Preferences," "Temporary Appointment," "Probation," "Transfer," etc.

The first few lectures are scheduled to be held in the Interstate Commerce Commission, Hearing Room B. For further details see Lucien Koch, Labor Extension 95, Room 614 Albee Building.

WHAT THE OTHER LODGES ARE DOING

RESETTLEMENT

Resettlement Lodge #206 has what we would call a darn good Grievance Committee. To the Grievance Committee must go the credit for reinstatement of in the neighborhood of twenty persons whose dismissals were believed to be discriminatory. If that isn't good work, we'd like to know what is Bouquets again to R.A. Lodge #206 for its November "R.A. Unionist," which is chuck-full of good writing on labor topics.

* * *

W. P. A.

Due to the efforts of the W.P.A. Union, some W.P.A. project control employees who suffered salary cuts under the recent reclassification are likely to get raises soon. Officials have agreed to pay the top salary of the new classification if the employees' efficiency records show that they rate increases.

* * *

A. A. A. LODGE #116

We are glad to note that Lodge #116 is awakening from its lethargy and is beginning to work in behalf of its members. In face of the imminent lay-offs, the Union has plenty of work to do ... Members of Lodge #31 are sympathetic with the

plight of A.A.A. employees and have expressed willingness to cooperate with Lodge #116 on its job-security efforts.

* * *

LABOR #12

Promotions in several bureaus of this Department are being filled directly from the personnel. According to an agreement made by Lodge #12 (working together with the N.F.F.E.), with the officials, a notice is circulated whenever a vacancy appears. Only when there are no eligibles - so runs the pact - does the Department apply to the Civil Service Commission.

* * *

N. L. R. B.

This Union has an agreement similar to that of Labor's, but it is a signed bona-fide collective agreement and works better, we are told, than that of the former.

* * *

SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD

Not satisfied with close to 400 members in the District, the S.S.B. Union recently sent organizers to the Baltimore unit. At least 50 employees signed up on the first day.

* * *

ANTI-UNION CONDUCT NIPPED

The Grievance Committee of Lodge 31 was on the job a few weeks ago, when a clear-cut case of anti-unionism was reported to the debit of a petty Chief in the Department. Investigation confirmed the allegations and presented further evidence of general lowered morale and efficiency in the Division in question.

The Committee, upon conference with Mr.

Appleby and Dr. Stockberger, received assurance of strong condemnation of the attitude of the Supervisor concerned, and a promise that remedial steps would be taken.

Further assurance was given that the policy of the Administration on such matters would be conveyed to the supervisory personnel in an appropriate manner.

* * *

NEWS ON THE LABOR FRONT

A.F. of L. Suspends C.I.O.

The Convention of the American Federation of Labor, with representatives of more than 1,000,000 members not in attendance, voted support of a resolution approving the action of the Executive Council in having suspended the ten unions who had committed themselves to support of the Committee for Industrial Organization.

The Convention refused to uphold a small group of die-hards who counseled expulsion. In a day when solidification of capital is being hastened, not alone by mechanization itself but by the organization of super-structures of chambers of commerce, boards of trade, manufacturers associations, and Iron and Steel Institutes, expulsion could have resulted in so disuniting labor as to have left it, alone, the loser.

That the Convention should have seen fit to accept suspension of C.I.O. unions for having committed no other seeming act than that of endeavoring to draw new membership into the Federation, portends grave consequences for a unified labor.

It is fortunate, however, that the entire import of the Resolutions Committee report, which was the basis of the Convention's action, should have centered about the need for unity. The report did well to close, "united we stand; divided we fall."

Nation's Seamen Strike

The nation-wide maritime strike, which is destined to be one of the most important in maritime labor's history, shows signs which augur success.

Originally called on the West Coast by the Maritime Federation of the Pacific when ship-operators refused to renew that clause of a contract which provided for union control of hiring halls, the strike idea has spread to the Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports. Seamen, longshoremen, radio-operators, pilots and officers have answered the call sent out for united action.

With union officials actively combatting it, members of the International Seamen's Union consolidated strike sentiment, organized a Seamen's Defense Committee in New York, issued a strike call, and received what seems to be overwhelming support from their rank and file.

Investigations conducted by the President's National Committee on Safety at Sea indicate that conditions under which seamen are compelled to work are among the worst of any branch of labor. There is a long apprenticeship, low wages, long hours. Often living quarters are unsanitary; regularly they are subordinated to space for cargo.

Under these circumstances strikers demand: an 8-hour day, cash payment for overtime, union control of hiring halls, improvement in living condition on board ship.

Leaders of the strike are frank in outlining their intentions should the strike be successful--the creation of a national industrial union of all labor engaged in the shipping trades.

Bondix Gives Way

1100 workers of the Bondix Products Corp. "sat in" for close to a week in an effort to force union recognition from the management. The immediate reply from Boss Bondix was a harsh one - he ordered the entire plant "fired" and shut off the heat and power. But after a week's dolorful surveying of lapsed orders he had a change of heart. Now the workers are back at their jobs, the heat's turned on, and the Union is recognized as the bargaining agency for the plant.